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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted of 42 secondary schools in the North-Eastern Education Board area of Northern Ireland concerning remedial reading practices and procedures adopted by remedial reading teachers. The survey consisted of 50 questions divided into seven parts: general background information on the schools: number of pupils receiving remedial assistance: organization of remedial assistance: teaching staff involved--qualifications, experience, and status: assessment of pupils with reading difficulties: approaches to remedial instruction: and evaluation of remedial programs. The survey was followed by structured interviews with the principal remedial teachers in ten of these schools to obtain elaboration on a number of the responses to the questionnaire. Results revealed that virtually no differences existed in most of the practices and procedures adopted by teachers, specially qualified or not, in the remedial departments of these schools. The survey also revealed a strong plea from the teachers for special training courses, coupled with a strong criticism of existing courses, both preservice and inservice. (MKM)

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TEACHING REMEDIAL READING - WHAT PREPARATION IS REQUIRED?

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A recent detailed survey* by the authors, of all secondary schools in the North-Eastern Education Board area of Northern Ireland reveals that virtually no differences exist in most practices and procedures adopted by teachers, specially qualified or not, in the remedial departments of these schools. However, alongside this uniformity the survey also reveals a strong plea from the same teachers for special training courses coupled with a strong criticism of existing courses, both pre- and in-service. Beginning with a discussion of these findings the paper will discuss some of their implications and offer some tentative solutions to the problems they reflect.

*Johnston, Mary 'A survey of the provision for remedial reading instruction in secondary schools within the North-Eastern Education and Library Board area; presented in part-fulfilment of the regulations for the degree of M.A., Education Centre, The New University of Ulster, Coleraine, Northern Ireland.

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Introduction

Recent years have seen a growing concern being expressed about the number of young people entering and, indeed, leaving second level education with inadequate standards in reading. The NFER report 'Trends in Reading Standards' (1972) might be taken as the first signal of this concern and it led directly to the setting up of the Bullock Committee whose report 'A Language for Life' (1975) attempted to provide guidelines for the whole of the language and reading curriculum from pre-school to teacher training levels.

In Northern Ireland the most recent survey of reading standards, Wilson (1976), continues to underline this concern. The number of eleven-year olds with a reading age of less than the average nine-year old is reported at 20 per cent, and the number of fifteen-year olds reading below the level of the average nine-year old at 6 per cent. In terms of a population of twenty-eight and a half thousand fifteen-year olds this meant that almost two thousand pupils were entering their final year of compulsory schooling semi-literate. This figure would be considerably raised if the threshold between semi-literacy and functional or adult literacy was to be raised as many, e.g. Moyle (1973) and Bullock (1975) have argued that it should be, given the demands made on literacy in contemporary life.

Such concern naturally focuses attention on the kinds of responses schools have been making to the problem. In England and Wales, and similarly in Northern Ireland, special provision within the context of normal schooling for pupils with reading difficulties dates back to the late 40s and early 50s following research by Burt, Schonell and Birch. Since then this provision has been developed until today remedial assistance is widely available and is supported by specialists in the schools psychological services and by teams of peripatetic teachers. In addition pre-service and in-service training provides courses of various kinds in

special education, remedial teaching and reading development to assist those involved.

In the early years of remedial provision it was not generally envisaged that special assistance for pupils with reading difficulties should be available beyond the first year of secondary level. Indeed it was intended that most of the problem cases should be successfully dealt with at primary level. However, as it became evident that many pupils continued to experience difficulties in reading and writing the need to provide special assistance beyond this stage became irresistable. So it is that remedial departments are a normal feature of most secondary schools in Northern Ireland, grammar schools excepted.

In spite of this extension of remedial provision at secondary level a certain ambivalence and uncertainty surrounds its operation. The Bullock Committee reporting on the situation in England and Wales commented on the low level of priority afforded this area of the curriculum (par. 18.17). Sampson (1975) drew attention to the existing state of confusion: "numerous constraints and confusions existed and different authorities varied greatly in their budgeting and arrangements".

No detailed account being available describing the situation in Northern Ireland it was decided by the authors of this paper to attempt to provide one. Such an account would detail the provision being made within one local educational area, that of the North-Eastern Education and Library Board which is responsible for schools in most of County Antrim and the eastern part of County Derry. The survey carried out to provide this account is reported in Johnston (1979).

In the course of analysing the results of the survey the authors were struck by the very high degree of uniformity reported by the teachers contacted as far as a wide variety

of practices were concerned. This uniformity was all the more surprising when examined in the light of the teachers' qualifications. Whether specially qualified or not for teaching in a remedial situation teachers reported similar approaches to their work. A further point of interest to the authors was the high degree of dissatisfaction expressed by the qualified teachers about their preparation for remedial teaching. Neither pre-service nor in-service courses had, in their opinions, adequately equipped them with the skills or techniques which would enable them to successfully undertake remedial work. Teacher qualifications have frequently been singled out by researchers in this field, Sampson (1970), N.I.C.E.R. (1974), Bullock Report (1975), Mehaffey (1978) as a matter for particular concern, both because such a small proportion of remedial teachers appear to hold any special qualifications over and above a basic teaching certificate and because the nature of some of the specialist courses available is regarded as unsatisfactory.

The purpose of the present paper therefore is to highlight a number of issues related to the preparation of teachers for work with pupils in need of special assistance in their reading development using the findings of the general survey into the provision for remedial instruction in Northern Ireland's North-Eastern Education and Library Board area as the basis for this discussion.

Questions will be raised about what the teachers reported concerning their views and practices; to what extent might these be considered representative and in what ways are any changes sought by them considered necessary in both the pre-service and in-service preparation of such teachers.

First a brief outline of the survey in general terms and of the findings in the sections dealing with teacher qualifications and attitudes in particular.

Procedure

The survey consisted of two parts, a postal questionnaire to all 42 secondary intermediate and comprehensive schools in the area, followed by a structured interview with the principal remedial teacher in ten of these schools in order to obtain elaboration on a number of the responses to the questionnaire and to take up some additional points suggested by these responses.

The postal survey consisted of fifty questions divided into seven parts:

1. General background information on the school
2. Number of pupils receiving remedial assistance
3. Organisation of remedial assistance
4. Teaching staff involved; qualifications, experience, status
5. Assessment of pupils with reading difficulties
6. Approaches to remedial instruction
7. Evaluation of remedial programme.

The ten schools selected for the structured interview were representative of the schools surveyed by post. Factors such as size, management structure (i.e. whether publicly controlled or voluntary), urban or rural, co-educational or single sex were considered in selecting them. Consequently six schools from the public sector and four from the voluntary sector were chosen.

Following a pilot study in a number of schools in the Western Education and Library Board area, the questionnaire was distributed to schools in May 1978. Thirty-eight schools returned completed questionnaires, a response rate of 93%. Interviews in the ten selected schools were conducted during the first term of the 1978-79 school year.

While the main aim of the survey was to to obtain information to provide a detailed profile of practice it was thought valuable to use the opportunity to test a number of hypotheses concerning teacher qualifications. In general terms these hypotheses stated that teachers with special qualifications for remedial teaching would differ significantly in their work from teachers lacking qualifications.

Four of these hypotheses are relevant to this paper and were as follows:

1. Schools with teachers with qualifications in remedial instruction will differ significantly from those without teachers with such qualifications in their use of standardised tests.
   Schools with teachers with qualifications in remedial instruction will not differ significantly from those without teachers with such qualifications in their use of standardised tests.

2. Schools with teachers with qualifications in remedial instruction will differ significantly from those without teachers with such qualifications in their assessment and record-keeping practices.
   Schools with teachers with qualifications in remedial instruction will not differ significantly from those without teachers with such qualifications in their assessment and record-keeping practices.

3. Schools with teachers with qualifications in remedial instruction will differ significantly from those without teachers with such qualifications in their use of resources and materials.
   Schools with teachers with qualifications in remedial instruction will not differ significantly from those without teachers with such qualifications in their use of resources and materials.

4. Schools with teachers with qualifications in remedial instruction will differ significantly from those without teachers with such qualifications in whether or not their remedial teachers attain head of department status.

   Schools with teachers with qualifications in remedial instruction will not differ significantly from those without teachers with such qualifications in whether or not their remedial teachers attain head of department status.

With respect to several practices, use was assessed on the basis of frequency of use and this may well raise a query since similar degrees of frequency need not suggest similar modes of use. However, in the context of the kind of study being attempted it would not have been possible to directly observe practice. Frequency of use would, however, at least indicate an important aspect of using the practices investigated and provide the basis for further questioning in the course of the structured interview section of the survey.

In effect frequency of use was assessed on a three-point scale which asked respondents to indicate whether certain practices were used 'often', 'sometimes' or 'never'.

Results

1. Teacher Qualifications

TABLE 1

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Qualification	Number of Schools	% of Total Schools
Reading and special education	15	39.5
Reading only	5	13.2
Special education only	4	10.5
Other non-relevant special qualifications	4	10.5
None	10	26.3

Most surveys have pointed to the large percentage of teachers without special qualifications who are involved in remedial work. In the present survey 14 (36.8%) of the schools had teachers lacking any relevant special qualifications. In terms of overall teacher numbers only 27 out of a total of 83 full-time and part-time remedial teachers claimed to have qualifications which were relevant to the post in which they were employed. Of these 27, 23 had qualifications in reading and 18 also had qualifications in "special education". The six schools without a full-time remedial teacher employed 8 part-time teachers, only 2 of whom had special qualifications in reading and/or special education.

If experience may be taken as a 'qualification' then it is interesting to note that almost all those involved in the remedial field were quite experienced teachers. In 28 (73.7%) of the schools teachers had been teaching 5 years or more while those in 34.2% of the schools had been teaching 11 years or more. 10 (24.9) schools employed teachers with under 4 years experience for remedial work.

TABLE 2

TEACHER EXPERIENCE

Number of Years Teaching	Number of Schools	% of Total Schools
1 - 4 years	10	24.3%
5 - 10 years	15	39.5%
11+ years	13	34.2%
Total	38	100

Organisation of Remedial Instruction

A diversity of practice was revealed when the pattern for organising remedial instruction was examined 21 (55.3%) of the schools employed more than one form of organisation, 9 (23.7%) using a combination of remedial class(es) and withdrawal groups. Of the 17 schools which had only one form of organisation, 9 (23.7%) favoured withdrawal groups while remedial streams were the choice of 8 (21%). A further 9 schools used a combination of special streams and withdrawal into remedial classes while 6 schools reported the practice of the remedial teacher being in the normal form classes alongside the subject teachers, this being supplemented by withdrawal for further special assistance of some pupils. Overall, withdrawal featured in 24 schools, either alone or in combination with some other form of organization.

TABLE 3
ORGANIZATION OF REMEDIAL INSTRUCTION

Form of Organisation of Remedial Instruction	Number of Schools	% of Total Schools
Withdrawal only	9	23.7
Remedial streams only	8	21.0
Remedial streams plus withdrawal	9	23.7
Combined in form class - class remedial work plus withdrawal	6	15.8
Others	6	15.8
Total	38	100.0

Use of Standardised Tests - hypothesis 1

It can be seen from Table 4 that the Daniels and Diack Graded Test of Reading Experience and the Schonell Graded Word Reading Test were the two most popular tests used by teachers with or without special qualifications. Very few schools reported use of more diagnostic type tests such as the Neale Analysis of Reading ability or the Edinburgh Reading Tests. There were no significant differences between qualified and non-qualified teachers in their use of any of the tests listed.

TABLE 4

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS AND USE OF STANDARDIZED TESTS

Reading Test	Schools with Teachers with Qualifications		Schools with Teachers with Qualifications		Chi-Squared
Burt Rearranged Word Reading Test	7	29.2%	4	28.6%	0.11
Edinburgh Reading Test	1	4.2%	0	0%	0.08
Holborn Reading Test	2	8.3%	1	7.1%	0.24
Neale Analysis of Reading Ability	7	29.2%	6	42.9%	0.25
Schonell Graded Word Reading Test	14	58.3%	9	64.3%	0.00
Schonell Silent Reading Test A	13	54.2%	3	21.4%	2.66
Schonell Silent Reading Test B	10	41.7%	3	21.4%	0.84
S.R.A. Tests	6	25%	3	21.4%	0.02
Graded Test of Reading Experience Daniels and Diack	24	100%	14	100%	0.00
Vernon Graded Word Reading Test	1	4.2%	0	0%	0.08
	1 degree of freedom				
	None significant at 5% level				

Record-Keeping - hypothesis 2

With respect to record-keeping slightly fewer, not specifically qualified teachers claimed to keep a detailed record of each pupil's background and progress but the difference was insignificant at the 5% level.

Although many schools in both categories reported that they kept written records of the pupils' background and progress the degree of detail varied considerably as will be discussed below (p.15).

TABLE 5

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS AND RECORD-KEEPING

Record-Keeping	Schools with Teachers with Qualifications (24)		Schools without Teachers with Qualifications (14)		Chi-Squared
Written record of each pupil's background and progress	19	79.2%	9	64.3%	0.39
Degrees of freedom = 1					
Not significant at 5% level					

Use of materials and resources - hypothesis 3

A wide range of materials and resources of a functional and a recreational kind were listed but in the analysis of the responses no significant differences in the frequency of their use emerged, with the single exception of the use of films. There is a significant difference at the 1% level between teachers with and without qualifications in their use of films. Five of the 24 schools with teachers with qualifications never used films in connection with remedial work compared to 11 of the 14 without qualified teachers.

TABLE 6

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS AND USE OF RESOURCES

Resources	Frequency					
	Often		Sometimes		Never	
	Number of Schools	% of Total Schools	Number of Schools	% of Total Schools	Number of Schools	% of Total Schools
Curriculum Packs	1	2.6	11	28.9	26	68.4
Films	5	13.2	17	44.7	16	42.1
Overhead Trans-parencies	1	2.6	15	39.5	22	57.9
Programmes Learning Kits	16	42.1	15	39.5	7	18.4
Radio Programmes	1	2.6	26	68.4	11	28.9
Records	5	13.2	17	44.7	16	42.1
Tapes/ Cassettes	13	34.2	18	47.4	7	18.4
Teaching Machines	5	13.2	2	5.3	31	81.6
T.V. Programmes	13	34.2	18	47.4	7	18.4
Word Games	14	36.8	23	60.5	1	2.6

TABLE 7

STATUS OF TEACHERS IN REMEDIAL DEPARTMENTS

	Head of Department Status						Chi-Squared
	Yes		No		Sometimes		
Schools with teachers with(24) qualifications	8	33.8%	9	37.5%	7	29.2%	4.51
Schools without teachers with(14) qualifications	3	21.4%	10	71.4%	1	7.1%	
Degrees of freedom = 2							
Not significant at 5% level							

Status of Qualified Teachers - hypothesis 4

50 per cent of the schools reported that remedial teachers have, or sometimes have, head of department status. While more schools with specially qualified teachers afford remedial teachers this status the difference is not significant between them and schools without such qualified staff, Table 7.

Discussion

Before discussing the details of the survey's findings there are some general points which need to be made. First the findings reveal that remedial assistance in the secondary schools of the North Eastern Education and Library Board Area is provided within the framework of a rather traditional approach. Pupils who are assessed as below average, or normal performance to a particular degree are deemed to be in need of special assistance. Such assistance is mainly provided by means of withdrawal, by means of a special stream, or both.

In such a situation the remedial teacher's function is essentially to provide special assistance which will help bring pupils up to, or close to the normal level of performance of their peer group. Golby and Gulliver (1979) have, not inappropriately, characterised this function as essentially an "ambulance service". A remedial teacher's function in providing this service is simply to help maintain the smooth operation of the mainstream curriculum and in no way to question, change or develop it.

The fact that remedial education is so organised follows very much from the nature of the secondary curriculum which is still structured in most of Northern Ireland's secondary schools along traditional subject specialist lines (Darby et al, 1978). Indeed most secondary schools in Northern Ireland (ibid.) stream quite strictly according to ability. Subject teaching in this context makes few concessions to differences of ability and particularly makes few to the less able. Thus, those who perform below average are likely to be left behind unless assisted in some special way to improve their performance. The idea that teaching might take account of a mixed or wide range of ability in a particular class and provide exercises and text books accordingly is not widely accepted (ibid). Nor is it generally accepted as the present study reveals that remedial teachers should co-operate closely with those mainstream teachers from whose classes these pupils are withdrawn

In discussing the findings of the present survey account has therefore to be taken of the fact that one model dominates the provision of remedial eduation in these schools. So in questioning the kind of preparation required for assisting less able readers attention must also be given to the context in which remedial teachers will operate.

The findings are discussed under general headings related to the four hypotheses detailed in the previous section.

1. Assessment and Record-Keeping

It appeared a valid assumption that schools with teachers specially qualified to teach remedial education would have recourse to a more sophisticated use of assessment procedures and means of record-keeping than would schools whose teachers lack such qualifications. In the event, the survey findings reveal that no significant differences existed between these schools (Tables 4 and 5). In fact both sets of schools were shown to be confining themselves, in the case of formal assessment to a very limited range of tests of the word recognition and sentence completion type.

While the authors would not suggest that formal tests offer any magic formula in the assessment of pupils' reading abilities it was surprising that specially qualified remedial teachers did not avail of tests of a more informative kind. Teachers may well argue that their own informal observations of pupils provide quite accurate information with which to assess pupils' difficulties. Indeed Strang (1969) claims that in many cases such observations can be very insightful and quotes Ridgway and Haring (1967) who concluded "that even a battery of tests does not predict as effectively as does teacher observation of the individual child". Pumpfrey (1977), however, argues that "the testing of reading is no more than the careful sampling of some important aspects of a child's

behaviour related to reading. This testing can be done informally and, or formally. Both aspects of the process are important. They are not mutually exclusive". Bullock (1975) in reference to findings similar to those in the present survey states, "A child's score on a word recognition test is a helpful piece of information about his level of achievement in one particular skill. But it will not provide any information about the words with which he is having difficulty in his current reading.....in order to decide what specific help is needed the teacher needs more precise information." (par. 17.16).

Record-keeping was reported in all but three of the schools, but differences emerged in the kinds of records being kept. The three factors listed by most schools concerned pupils' physiological condition, their reading age at transfer to the secondary school, and the results of tests they had taken. However, although a high percentage of schools indicated that home background was an important contributory factor to reading success nearly 40% did not keep any record of the home circumstances from which the pupils came. This figure included 9 of the schools with specially qualified teachers.

Information of a diagnostic nature was kept by a smaller number of schools than might have been expected. 35% of the schools failed to record comprehension difficulties, 45% recorded nothing about pupils' word attack skills and 64% nothing about pupils' abilities to use the library. In each instance schools with qualified staff are included.

In their recommendations concerning changes they thought desirable nearly all the teachers referred to a need for improved training in assessment and record-keeping. They were particularly concerned that they should become more adept in diagnosing difficulties and in formulating the appropriate assistance pupils required on this basis.

Since many of the specially qualified teachers made such remarks a critical reflection on existing courses is implied. Obviously merely to provide information about and demonstrations of assessment procedures, is not sufficient. Student-teachers need access to pupils in order to familiarize themselves with such procedures, both formal and informal. In particular it must be stressed that simply being able to administer a test and calculate a score as a result is meaningless. Unless the appropriate interpretation can be placed on such scores and suitable follow-up action determined the test might just as well not have been administered in the first place.

2. Use of materials and resources

Widlake (1977) suggests that variety had to be the spice of a remedial teacher's life and pointed out that there are many aids now available suitable for remedial instruction. This view is supported by Bullock (1975) on the grounds that pupils seeking such assistance often have poor attention spans and a variety of approaches are frequently necessary in order to successfully teach particular points.

The present survey reveals that a wide range of resources were being availed of, at least sometimes, but again no significant differences emerged between schools with and without specially qualified teachers. It was disconcerting to find, however, in the course of interviewing the teachers in the ten schools that this picture may not be as encouraging as it first appears. For example, most teachers interviewed claimed that there are not many suitable radio and T.V. programmes and this in spite of the fact that both the B.B.C. and I.T.V. broadcast a wide range of programmes directed at the needs of remedial teaching. The impression gained by the authors was that teachers were not very aware of what in fact is available.

Some teachers claimed that they did not believe in using what they called 'gimmicks', or 'frills', as they tended to classify materials of a technological kind. This attitude may well reflect inadequate training. Indeed, Bullock (1975) has pointed out that in initial training little emphasis is being placed on the use of audio-visual aids and this observation was echoed in the present survey by the teachers' requests for advice on the use of technological aids to be included in in-service courses.

Most teachers in the survey opted for the middle-of-the-road "sometimes" category when asked to indicate the frequency with which they used reading materials of a recreational and functional kind. A high percentage of schools, over 60 per cent in each case, indicated that they sometimes used comics, official forms, information leaflets, magazines, and newspapers. Popular paperbacks would appear to be the most popular source for reading since only 5.3 per cent of the schools indicated that they never use them in remedial work.

The wide range of sources drawn upon for reading material is a very heartening finding, but no significant difference emerged between the schools with specially qualified teachers and those without. More important to an overall assessment of remedial teaching would be some indication of the manner in which such materials are being used. To know that they are being used, however, is important, since it indicates an awareness on the part of the teachers to provide experience of reading beyond what is to be found in books intended essentially for instructional use.

3. Status of teachers

The specially qualified teachers in the schools surveyed did not appear to acquire positions of responsibility on the basis of such qualifications alone (Table 7). Qualifications are not, of course, the sole indication of suitability for a post of responsibility. However, when the views of the teachers are examined it would appear that many are of the opinion that teaching in a remedial department, or class does not enhance promotion prospects. The opinion was strongly voiced that

remedial teachers are seen mainly as being employed "to look after" the low ability pupils. In the course of the interviews with teachers this opinion was even more strongly expressed. Only three of those interviewed indicated that they would wish continue their careers in remedial work.

The low status which teachers feel is associated with remedial work must have serious repercussions on the overall effectiveness of what they are trying to achieve. This finding bears out the ambivalence and uncertainty which many researchers have discovered to be associated with remedial work at secondary level and to which reference was made earlier in this paper. It is this finding perhaps above all others in this survey which must give rise to a serious reassessment of what remedial work at this level should be concerned to achieve.

Conclusions

Bearing in mind the question regarding the preparation of teachers for remedial work which underlines this paper it would appear that one of two general conclusions can be drawn from the present survey. Either existing specialist courses do not provide the kind of training most needed by these teachers or such courses are redundant given that those who follow them do not seem to approach their work in ways which are significantly different from teachers lacking these qualifications. Whichever conclusion one favours the teachers themselves are dissatisfied about their preparation, and also about their status and their career prospects. Therefore, any attempt to resolve the question of teacher preparation should also take account of these wider issues.

First, to deal directly with the question of the kind of preparation required. Since the present survey suggests no significant differences between the two groups of teachers there is some evidence to indicate that non-specialist courses may well be just as effective (or ineffective) a means of preparing teachers for remedial work as some specialist courses.

Whatever the context for this preparation, and it is our belief that most of it can be provided in the general courses, a need to rethink the present provision is obvious.

The most glaring deficiency revealed by the present survey is the absence of an appreciation by the teachers involved that reading difficulties should not be seen and treated as isolated phenomena. This was particularly revealed in their approach to the diagnosis of their pupils' reading problems and the lack of account taken by many of their language environment. Therefore, in the first instance there is a need to appreciate that reading is a language process and that an understanding of its relationship to language development in general is necessary.

Our first recommendation is that all teachers undergo a comprehensive course in language development, within which reading would be studied alongside the other language skills and processes. There are several models for such a course and readers familiar with the Bullock Report will be aware of some of these. A second and related deficiency was the failure to relate remedial learning to the rest of the curriculum, the 'ambulance service' syndrome referred to earlier. This, of course, is a frequently made criticism, but it requires restating especially because of its language dimension. Our impression was that remedial classes can effectively operate as cosy worlds of their own, providing a very safe and secure environment. Frequently however it is a false cosiness because it avoids contact with the rest of the pupils' curriculum and so they are often no better equipped for learning in the more normal classroom, after remedial assistance than they were before.

This deficiency strengthens our recommendation that all teachers undergo a course in language development and, in particular, that they examine the fact that language is a cross-curricular concern and not just one for the English and remedial specialists.

If we continue with a view which sees language and, in particular reading, as merely an adjunct to learning then it will be treated in remedial classes as something requiring the isolated treatment it receives at present. Changing this view implies a radical, but not impossible change in our approach to teacher preparation.

The danger exists, that if responsibility for the less able is to be dispersed across the whole of the teaching body at secondary level, their particular problems may not receive all of the special attention required. Hence, there is likely to be a continuing need for some teachers with a very special concern for such pupils though not in the present exclusive way. Such teachers should be language specialists in the sense that they would be equipped with a very deep understanding of all aspects of language development. While primarily employed for remedial work they would also have a key role in advising on aspects of the language curriculum in a school, in helping to assess the language development of pupils and in deciding on particular remedial measures which some might require. The influence of such teachers could, therefore, be curriculum-wide, and their role and status considerably enhanced.

Preparation for such a role should only be developed in a post-experience course and in circumstances which clearly accepted the need for teachers who would exercise such a role. To make this development possible demands careful consideration by school authorities and curriculum specialists in particular, of the real needs of our pupils' secondary education. The fundamental question is are we to be content with the ambulance-like-service of the present remedial provision or do we look at the provision in terms of pupils' overall language needs. The former course means continuing the present unsatisfactory situation. The latter offers a challenge and the hope of effectively tackling the problems experienced by teachers and pupils alike.

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